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E. JOHN ALTOBELLO, Ph.D.

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18 March 1996,

Mayor Sheila Russell
City Hall
Cambridge, MA 02138

Re: Support for Library expansion plans

Dear Mayor Russell and Councilors,

I was unfortunately not able to stay this evening at the Council hearing on the proposed Library expansion plans, and would have liked to speak in support of the proposal as explained by Director Susan M. Flannery.

I fully support the expansion on the current site.

A compelling combination of reasons points to the obvious choice of the present location: the Library has increased and increasing space needs in order to respond to its patrons; the site that it currently occupies is the historic place where the Library began as an institution central to the vitality of this City. It has a place in people's hearts. To move some place else would be robbing people of a cherished emblem, and a practical value.

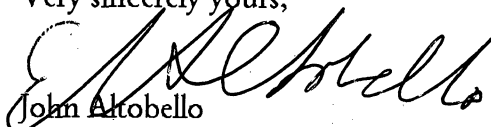
Rather than being a divisive factor in the open spaces surrounding the Library, the proposed addition in fact further defines two important and differentiated spaces which will have their own richness and character when delineated by a new structure. The addition will also have the effect of bringing the Library closer to the street (Broadway) and will add a greater civic presence to an important civic building.

I do not believe that a smaller building on this site would be able to accommodate the Library's needs. Through its transparency resulting from many windows, the new addition also has a close relationship to the outside and actually enhances the safety of the outdoor space by virtue of patrons who act inadvertently as watch guards simply by being present.

It would be a tremendous loss to the City - both in terms on civic presence, the historic memory, and the generous spatial program, to have the Library and its addition any place else than where it is now.

I hope you will consider my arguments in support of the plan as proposed at Council hearing.

Very sincerely yours,


John Altobello

Consent Communication #1

S-161

Communication was received from John
Altobello transmitting his support
for the proposed library expansion.

In City Council March 25, 1996

Placed on File